



CALIFORNIA LATINO LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS



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New Latino Caucus Member Profile

ASSEMBLY MEMBER ROGER HERNÁNDEZ



Born to blue-collar immigrant parents in the city of El Monte, Assemblymember Roger Hernández (D – San Gabriel Valley) has always appreciated the value of hard work, largely credited to his father and the examples he set for him and his siblings growing up.

Roger describes his father as a man who always held two jobs, doing all that he could to support his family. As a child, Roger would wake up twice every morning: once at 4 a.m., before the sun came up, to see his father off as he went to work; and again when it was time to go to school. After school, he'd come home to find his father getting ready to rush off to his second job. Roger saw how hard his father worked so that his children may gain opportunities, and he refused to let that sacrifice be in vain.

As the eldest of three other siblings, Roger took on the role of navigating his family through the society they had adopted, a role not uncommon among children of immigrant families. Whether by negotiating the purchase of the family car or wading through the bureaucratic processes of government agencies on behalf of his parents, he took the responsibility for helping his family survive and thrive in their new home. In a sense, Roger was constantly negotiating between his two worlds – one in which he adapted to his mostly Caucasian peers and neighbors, and another in which he acted as an intermediary between his family and the world-at-large.

After high school, Roger became a youth counselor mentoring at-risk students in

elementary and junior high where he realized the power of guidance in rehabilitating youth. The students he mentored, unexpectedly, helped Roger recognize that he wasn't alone in his own personal struggle, that he wasn't the only Latino with immigrant parents in a city full of people who shared their story, that he wasn't the only one who lacked guidance growing up, and that he could be the one to make a difference in these youth's lives.

In 1999, Roger decided to translate his knowledge and experience of adversity into activism by running for the Rowland Unified School Board. After observing firsthand the needs of many students and their families, he knew that he could bring a fresh approach to the education system that would address the diverse obstacles students faced. Recalling the difficulties of being raised in a large family with parents who sometimes needed to rely on their children for support, Roger sought out a collaborative effort that engaged students and their parents in their academic endeavors.

His role on the Rowland Unified School Board provided a stepping stone for a life dedicated to public service. After being elected to the West Covina City Council and serving as its mayor, Roger was elected to represent the 57th Assembly District in the California State Legislature in 2010.

After 12 years in public service, Roger still sees his life's mission with clarity: "I love representing my people. Public service is best rendered when you are responsive to your communities and I plan to continue listening to their problems and doing all I can to help them overcome. My life has showed me that there are always walls that try to keep you from your full potential. But you can tear them down. I did and I pledge to always help others do the same."

ASM Torres' trip to Guatemala (May 2011)



GUATEMALA'S AMBASSADOR OF PEACE & TOURISM

Assembly Member Norma Torres Visits Guatemala



Assembly Member Norma Torres pictured with the President of the National Congress of Guatemala, Jose Roberto Alejos Cambará.

Assembly Member Norma Torres was invited by the Guatemalan Congress to speak during their plenary session on May 12, 2011. It was a historic occasion, granted to Torres as she is the only Guatemalan serving in the State Assembly. Torres was also named "Ambassador of Peace" by the Guatemalan Ministry of Peace and

"Ambassador of Tourism" by the Guatemalan Institute for Tourism.

During her visit, Torres met with the Central American Parliament, and non-governmental organizations representing indigenous and women's groups to discuss ways in which she could help with projects benefiting both Guatemala and California. She discussed the importance of education, women's rights, tourism, and the importance of allowing Guatemalans who live abroad to vote during the country's national elections.

Below you will find links to various videos documenting ASM Torres' trip:

- [Cambio De La Rosa](#)
- [Congress Speech](#)
- [Buenos Dias Nuestro Mundo Interview](#)
- [Universidad de San Carlos](#)

THE HEALTH OF THE LATINO COMMUNITY

The Latino Caucus Hosts Health Summit at the University of Southern California

The Latino Legislative Caucus Foundation is hosting a Health Summit at the University of Southern California's Health Sciences Campus on Friday, August 5, 2011 to address many health issues within the Latino community.

Topics to be addressed at the summit include: Federal Healthcare Reform Implementation, Healthcare Workforce Diversity & Development, State Budgetary Impacts on Access to Care, and Illness & Health Issues that Disproportionately Impact Latinos. These four topics were selected because of their implications for our Latino community.

With the implementation of the federal healthcare reform law, there will be

sweeping changes to the healthcare industry nationwide and we must be poised to address what this means to our Latino community.

Also to be discussed will be the factors that perpetuate the epidemics of diabetes and obesity within the Latino community. Everything from where a person lives to where a person works influences the access they have to equitable healthcare. These and other topics will be addressed at the Summit.

The event is free and open to the public, but is limited to the first 150 RSVPs. For more information or to receive a registration form, please send an email to ca.latinocaucus@gmail.com.

THE FARMWORKER STRUGGLE CONTINUES

Governor Brown Vetoes SB 104, the Fair Treatment for Farm Workers Act

On Tuesday, June 28th, Governor Jerry Brown vetoed SB 104, the Fair Treatment of Farm Workers Act, which would have allowed farm workers to unionize by signing a petition away from the watchful eyes of field bosses. In the hours leading up to his veto, Governor Brown gave little indication as to his final decision giving hope to the assembled farm workers who had been marching outside the capitol in support of the bill. In his veto message, Governor Brown simply said he vetoed the bill because he feared it would drastically alter the Agriculture Labor Relations Act of 1975, legislation Brown signed in his first stint as governor which allows for the unionization of farm workers.

SB 104 was strongly supported by the United Farm Workers who argued this

legislation was needed to better provide for the provisions set out in the ALRA. They argue that card-checking, signing a petition to unionize away from the fields, would have allowed more farm workers to freely unionize without fear of reprisal. As it stands, only 5% of California's 400,000 farm workers are unionized.

As word of Governor Brown's veto spread, the UFW promised to continue the fight to implement card-checking. If history is any guide, the UFW will follow up on that promise. This is the fifth time since 2004 that legislation providing for card-checking has been vetoed by the governor's office. They had hoped that with the change in governorship from Schwarzenegger to Brown, SB 104 would finally be signed. However, that was not the case.

SB 104 Rally with United Farm Workers (June 29, 2011)



Latino LGBT Health Briefing (July 6, 2011)



LATINO LGBT HEALTH BRIEFING

Latino Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Health Focus of Briefing

On Wednesday, July 6th, Assembly Member Ricardo Lara, Chair of the Latino Caucus Select Committee on LGBT Latinos, facilitated an LGBT Health Briefing, which was a collaborative effort between the Latino Caucus, LGBT Legislative Caucus, and various supportive organizations. The main focus of the briefing was to bring awareness to the many barriers that LGBT Latinos endure in accessing health services. From the sociocultural stereotypes of the LGBT community to unsupportive families, all of these factors affect how LGBT Latinos access health care services.

One of the presenters, Dr. Octavio Vallejo, provided his personal testimony as an LGBT doctor who has lived with HIV for more than 20 years. He described the low self-esteem he endured while growing

up and the feeling that the only way he would be worth something is by working towards getting "letters after my name," in the form of a doctorate. Now a doctor, Vallejo is currently working as a UCLA John Fogarty Fellow developing new skills in the field of HIV/AIDS research.

Although there have been recent strides within our society to address concerns faced by the LGBT community, the issue of homophobia is still very prevalent in the Latino community. It is the hope of the Latino Caucus that through the open discourse provided at these policy briefings, we will break down the cultural, social, and psychological barriers that have stigmatized some in our community, and will continue to educate society about the hardships LGBT Latinos continue to face.



DID YOU KNOW?

Food, water and shelter (as proposed by Maslow's Hierarchy of needs) are the three most basic necessities that a human being needs to live. When immigrants come to America, they often times deprive themselves of these vital necessities in pursuit of a better life for their children and themselves. Frequently, these undocumented workers must cross the Sonoran Desert and while some do arrive safely, others die inhumanely due to heat strokes, dehydration or hyperthermia. Eleanor Roosevelt once posed the question, "When will our consciences grow so tender that we will act to prevent human misery rather than avenge it?"

In 1986, Enrique Morones created [Border Angels](#) in an attempt to save the lives of these hardworking people. Originally created to "provide humanitarian assistance to immigrants" in San Diego County, Border Angels now participates all over the US/Mexico border.

"Already ten thousand men, women and children have died while trying to cross... and we don't want any more," said Morones in a recent interview. By leaving large water supplies, food and clothing near and around popular crossing sites for immigrants, Border Angels has saved hundreds of lives.

In the Sonoran desert, the summers are mortally hot with record temperatures of up to 127° Fahrenheit: conditions where having fresh water becomes extremely vital. The winters around the US/Mexico border are also bad. Winter clothing, food and water are placed in storage bins to help those crossing in the freezing temperatures. All of these supplies help ensure that immigrants in search of a better life can have a fair chance when put up against the deadly conditions of the Sonoran desert.

But the work of the Border Angels doesn't stop there; the group also helps immigrants by advocating Humane Immigration Reform as well as informing Americans of the many violations to human rights that are made to immigrants by racist extremists.

As the growing community of volunteers gains strength, the non-profit organization has become a strong voice for migrants all around the U.S. as well as a complete "lifesaver" that prevents human misery for many.



Border Angels replenishing drop points for food and water



Enrique Morones debate with Maricopa County, Sheriff Joe Arpaio



CALENDAR OF EVENTS / IMPORTANT DATES

JULY 2011

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

July 29 (Fri)	Latino Caucus Member Birthday: Assembly Member Roger Hernandez
Aug 4 (Fri) 8:00 am – 2:00 pm	Latino Legislative Caucus Foundation Health Summit Location: University of Southern California – Health Sciences Campus Catherine & Joseph Aresty Conference Center 1441 Eastlake Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90033

For more information about upcoming events, please contact Armando Chavez at (916) 319-2056.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Website: <http://www2.legislature.ca.gov/latinocaucus/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=57405266134>

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/LatinoCaucus>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/latinocaucus> (@latinocaucus)

Photo-Album: <http://picasaweb.google.com/CA.LatinoCaucus>

If you have any questions regarding the newsletter, please contact Armando Chavez at Armando.Chavez@asm.ca.gov